Through the Looking Glass of Assessment

Developing an assessment toolkit to help spread the word about the value of games in libraries
Who is...?
What do we mean?

• By assessment?
• By games?
• By literacy?
• By learning?
• By value?
Why Another Toolkit?

- **Methodological Toolkit** for Studying Games
- **Games For Change** – For making social issue games
- **ALA Gaming Toolkit** –
  - Literacy Readiness Inventory (LRI) – macro view
  - Evaluation Tips – fall mostly on the programmatic side
- An assessment toolkit can
  - Focus specifically on assessment issues
  - Improve on previous evaluation resources
  - Build community infrastructure and knowledge
    - Documents
    - White Papers
    - Training Modules
What are we assessing?

- Game Program?
- Event
- Video Game?
- Library Staff?
- Gamers?
- Many gaming tools focus on developing games of a certain genre
- Instead let’s explore...
  - The behavioral and social modifications gamers make as a result of participation in game programs
  - The various types of knowledge, skills gamers acquire through the act of playing game (learning, literacy)
  - Negative impacts games may have
Why assess?

• Improve our practices
• Determine if games meet library mission
• Engage in difficult questions
• Change our behavior
  – How do we limit access to mature games?
  – How do we separate age groups?
  – How do we intervene in special cases?
• Further justification for innovation
• Our goal: To promote “Mindful Playing”
Video Games and Violence

• CDC granted $10 million to study relationship between video games and gun violence
According to some previously published studies, **BENEFITS FROM GAMES**
Video Games and Learning

• Improve self-efficacy toward math learning (Ke, 2008)
• Increase intrinsic motivation and other factors* for students playing global citizenship game (Lim, 2008)
• Increase engagement for students learning genetics (Annetta et al., 2009)
• Teach information literacy skills (Gumulak & Webber, 2011)
Video Games and Motor Skills

• Used to motivate physical activity (Papastergiou, 2009)
• Increase precision in surgeon training (Rosser et al., 2007)
• Increase attention in action play (Dye et al., 2009)
Current assessment practices used by library game programs

SOME ASSESSMENT TOOLS
Creating a Game Experience

Everyone Plays at the Library
Creating Great Gaming Experiences for All Ages
Scott Nicholson

Gamers in the Library?!: The Why, What, and How of Videogame Tournaments for All Ages
Eli Neiburger
More Assessment Tools

• Gaming Toolkit.org (also by ALA)
  – **Evaluation** – Example surveys, video game specific resources
  – Lesson plans to connect games to learning
    • **Fantasy Football**
    • **Music**
A vision

• Lindquist & Long (2011, p.237) – “one direction for the simulation could take the form of a game in which students build their own virtual archive or library, from selecting period-appropriate clothing and furnishings to choosing digital resources to populate its drawers and shelves. Students would be required to consider the intellectual content of the sources to create a meaningful organization for their simulated archive or library, thus meeting learning objectives to think critically about and create context for the material.”
First step towards an assessment toolkit

CURRENT STUDY
Very active in the field of gaming John investigates game design and the gaming experience. His primary concerns are designing new games for his company, speaking engagements, research projects, book writing, and other tasks related to the gaming industry.

Sandra is a researcher who explores what goes on when people game. Using qualitative and quantitative methods her research verifies that in limited cases games engage people in an information literacy task and are linked to positive outcomes for a variety of educational settings.
Delphi Study

• Get people talking
  – What are important assessment practices related to games?
  – What are the important assessment resources related to games?
  – Which assessment questions are critical for us to engage in right now?
NEXT STEPS
What would another toolkit accomplish?

• It would be a resource for building knowledge around assessment practices
• It would advance assessment conversation while still addressing library mission
• It would foster continued innovation
• It would provide justification for expenditure of resources
Questions

• What are the assessment questions you need answers to right now?
• What one thing would you put into an assessment toolkit?

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References

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